

Further Guidance for Centre Assessment Grades and Rank Ordering

Purpose of this guidance

This is a guide for teachers and centre staff who are preparing to submit grades and a rank ordering of students to Pearson Edexcel for the June 2020 exam series. Centres will approach this task in different ways, this document is a suggestion on how you could approach it if you are looking for guidance, there is no requirement to follow this as a process.

This document has been written to bring together the up-to-date guidance you need along with some suggestions around how to approach supplying a centre assessment grade and a rank order of your students.

The information below can be used as guidance to help you through this process. It has been written to supply you with some different ways to approach this task – not as instructions which must be followed. You may have already been following an approach which has been agreed with your centre and/or MAT and it is hoped that this document will complement any approach you have decided to take.

Key documents

There are a number of key documents you might want to familiarise yourself with before you start the process. These are listed below as hyperlinks.

1. [Ofqual guidance on how GCSE and A levels will be awarded](#) – 3rd April 2020.
2. [Ofqual consultation on GCSE and A levels grading proposals](#) – 15th April. NB: this consultation is now closed but this document outlines the options.

3. [Ofqual consultation response](#) – 5th May 2020.

4. [Update from the JCQ – Joint Qualifications Council](#) – 28th April.

Preparation

Before you begin to work on centre assessed grades, you will need to:

1. Confirm which students are being graded for which subjects
 - Make sure each student has been entered for the correct subject and for the correct tier (if applicable).
 - You may include any private students if your head of centre is confident there is enough evidence to provide an accurate centre assessed grade
2. Ensure that all subject teachers have agreed a holistic approach to grading their students and that this will be applied consistently. A holistic approach should take into account the students' performance across the whole qualification rather than based on their performance per paper or per question. Ensure that all teachers understand the approach which is being taken and are confident in applying this approach across all students.

Step 1 – grading your students

What are Centre Assessment grades?

A centre assessment grade is the grade your student would be most likely to have achieved if they had sat their exams and completed any non-exam assessment in the 2020 exam series.

How can I decide the grades?

1. Make sure you have all the evidence you need. Judgements should balance different sources of evidence such as:
 - classwork
 - bookwork
 - any participation in performances in subjects such as music, drama or PE
 - any non-exam assessment – whether or not complete (only work completed before 20th March)
 - the results of any assignments or mock exams

- previous examination results – for example, for any re-sitting students or those with relevant AS qualifications
- any other records of student performance over the course of study.

Remember: There is **no** requirement to consider work undertaken after the closure of schools and colleges on 20th March and you should be cautious in considering work produced after closure that shows a change in performance that could be explained by the context in which the work was undertaken.

2. Agree between all teachers on each subjects a holistic approach across the **whole** qualification rather than awarding a grade for each paper and/or each piece of evidence.
3. Refer to the Pearson Edexcel grade characteristics for the most popular subjects – written by the chair of examiners – for Grades 7 and 4 for GCSE and International GCSE and A and C at A level – which can be found on our website [here](#). There are also some subject grade descriptors for GCSE on the Ofqual website [here](#).
4. Using these grade characteristics should help you establish which students are at Grade 4 or 7 (or A and C at A level). You can then use knowledge of previous year grades and student performance to form the basis of allocating grades to other students. Remember to cover the full grade range when doing this.
5. Carry out internal standardisation if there are several sets or classes within each subject and if there is more than one teacher teaching the subject. This is good practice and ensures that you are all in agreement with the grades and the approach.
6. You will assign a number grade from 9-1 for GCSE and International GCSE and a letter grade from A*-U for AS and A level. Centres assessment grades could also include a 'U' (ungraded). For GCSE combined science, the 9-9 to 1-1 grade scale should be used.
7. The grades, rank orderings and endorsements are confidential and must not be given to students or parents/guardians. Please refer to Ofqual's Information for Head of Centres for more details (link at beginning of the document)
8. This process should be applied to all students who have an entry in the qualification. This includes students who are not in year 11 or 13. It can also include private students if there is enough evidence of the level of performance to offer a centre assessed grade.
9. **Special considerations:** please note that, in line with the JCQ guidance, exam boards will not be applying any adjustments for special considerations or access arrangements. Schools and colleges should submit a centre assessment grade that takes these into

account when considering what a student would have achieved had the adjustment been applied.

Step 2 – establishing a rank order

1. Once you have agreed the process, you and/or subject teachers will need to rank students within each grade for each individual subject.
2. When you have the centre assessment grades, the students then need to be ranked in order of performance within the grade they are assigned. For example, within Grade 7, student 1 is the most secure, student 2 is the second most secure and so on.
3. We would suggest you tackle rank ordering one grade at a time. For example, identify your grade 4 students and then split these students into three broad groups within the grade – so most secure (high), secure (medium) and borderline (low) – you may wish to then assign the rank order, starting from 1 (most secure) . You will then need to use your knowledge of the student, their progress and ability to fine tune the list.
4. During this process, it is enormously useful and reassuring to work with your colleagues to agree the grades and the rank order. This ensures that everyone is involved in the process and that you are able to use the same process across different sets, classes and year groups. And sometimes it is just good to have someone to talk through things with. You can also contact your [subject expert via email or live chat](#) to request the support you need.
5. There should be a single rank order for each subject, even if there are students from different year groups.

6. Subjects with tiers – things to remember

- Rank ordering should be completed across the tiers where the grades cross over. For example, for GCSE, all students achieving a grade 4 would be listed together rather than in a separate list for higher and foundation.
- Centre assessed grades should be submitted within the tier they are entered for. Remember that Foundation tier Centre Assessment Grades should be submitted between U and 5 and Higher tier grades between 9 and 4.
- To help support teachers in GCSE Mathematics, Science and MFL where there is tiering, we are creating additional support which will be made available on subject webpages. This support will help you to identify crossover questions (that appear on the foundation and higher papers) and explain how you can use these to support you in your decisions creating a single rank order for each grade

Step 3 – Verification

1. Once you have agreed the grade and the rank ordering, the head of department needs to review and verify the ranking across the subject area within your centre with members of their staff.
2. The head of centre should then review and verify each subject and approve the centre assessment grades for each subject.
3. The head of centre may want to do additional checks of the centre assessment grades to ensure they fall within the school's normal grade range/attainment. They may also want to check previous grade distributions at national level for the qualifications.

These are just suggested ideas and there is no requirement to carry out both or either of these checks. Until we receive confirmation of the standardisation approach, we are trying to offer best practice examples that should ensure the approach has been carried out in the right manner.

3. The verification process has been outlined by the JCQ as follows:
 - All grades and rank orders must be signed off by two subject teachers and the Head of Centre before submission to the exam boards
 - Two subject teachers must sign off each set of a subject's Centre Assessment Grades and the rank ordering (or if only one teacher is available, by the Head of Department)
 - The Head of Centre must sign off the Centre Assessment Grade and rank order, for each exam board, declaring the information is accurate and is a true representation of student performance. (If the Head of Centre is unavailable, they can delegate to a deputy.)
 - The exam boards will provide further information on submitting this information.
 - Once data has been completed, and the Head of Centre declaration submitted, no further entry amendments can be made.
4. The information about how to submit grades to Pearson Edexcel can be found [here](#).
5. All grades and rankings must be submitted to Pearson Edexcel between **1st and 12th June 2020**